METHODIST TROUBLES IN IRELAND
1798.

A

REPLY

TO

JOHN JOHNSON's REMARKS,

&c. &c.

Mr. Mather says = "We will sacrifice one half of the Chapels in the Kingdom before your delegates shall sit in Conference" pp 36

Dr. Cokes Sermon on the "Deity of Christ" is said to have been preached between 300 & 300 times. & Alas! Master, for it was borrowed" pp 38.

MR.

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REPLY

TO

MR. JOHN JOHNSON'S REMARKS,

ON AN

ADDRESS

LATELY

PUBLISHED AND SIGNED BY THIRTY MEN IN OFFICE

AMONGST THE

METHODISTS:

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An Affectionate Addrefs

TO THE

PEOPLE CALLED METHODISTS,

THROUGHOUT THE

KINGDOM OF IRELAND.

BEWARE THEREFORE, LEST THAT COME UPON YOU WHICH IS SPOKEN OF IN THE PROPHETS. BEHOLD, YE DESPISERS, AND WONDER AND PERISH: FOR I WORK A WORK IN YOUR DAYS, A WORK WHICH YE SHALL IN NO WISE BELIEVE, THOUGH A MAN DECLARE IT UNTO YOU.—ACTS XIII. 40, 41.

BUT WE DESIRE TO HEAR OF THEE WHAT THOU THINKEST: FOR AS CONCERNING THIS SECT, WE KNOW THAT EVERY WHERE IT IS SPOKEN AGAINST.—XXVIII. 22.

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A REPLY, &c.

LET ANOTHER MAN PRAISE THEE, AND NOT THINE OWN MOUTH; A STRANGER, AND NOT THINE OWN LIPS.—

Prov. 27, 2.

SIR,

IF, in the inveſtigation of, or ſearch after truth, we could diveſt ourſelves of prejudice to men and party; and from that ruinous thing of *ſelf*, which loves to have a ſhare in all that may have a tendency to pleaſe, or flatter our ruling paſſion—it would, ere now, have ſhone forth as the morning; or, as the ſun in his ſtrength. Your pamphlet came to hand; and from the age, experience, and knowledge, which you arrogate to yourſelf, ſomething might have been expected different from that which you have produced. But like the mountain in labour (which after much noiſe, trembling and mighty throes, produced a poor and inſignificant mouſe) has your pamphlet appeared. Did it contain nothing but that which might give you an innocent pleaſure; now the *graſs-hopper* has become a burthen to you, we would, as you obſerve, "have taken no notice of it." But as this is not the caſe, we are conſtrained to reply.

We will reſpect your age, experience, and wiſdom, ſo far as we perceive you have honoured theſe things. "But great men are not *always* wiſe; neither do the aged under-

ſtand judgement" (Job. 32, 9.) therefore let nothing flatter you, for we ſhall not reſign the cauſe of truth, (in which we are engaged) for provender to your HOBBY-HORSE.

We have ſome times indulged you, but the preſent things are too momentous, to be laid aſide, as matters of no importance.

Had you all the quirks of Logic in your remarks on our addreſs; and all the perſuaſion of oratory to the people, they would not convince us, neither the thinking part of them, that the things contained in our addreſs are falſehoods—that we are liars in ſupporting them—nor, that the eight propoſitions are "calcuiated to tear up Mr. Weſley's mode of diſcipline by the roots," particularly, that part of it, which concerns the expenditure of the public collections.

Your firſt comment on our Addreſs runs thus: "for the *matter* and *manner* in which it was *wrote*, appeared to me calculated to defeat its intentions." When a man turns critic he ought to be correct himſelf. In this you have departed from the rules of good Engliſh, and inſulted common ſenſe alſo. But to return—We muſt allow that we are but blunt men, or probably we ſhould not have engaged in the preſent conteſt. The *manner* then is blunt, the *matter* truth, as far as we can comprehend. This we hope to prove to the ſatisfaction of every unprejudiced mind. You proceed to defend the preachers, "for who can believe as yet the preachers to be what they are therein repreſented."

We were once going to inform you, that as many of the Preachers had no weight in the conference; though of the ſame family (as you and your ſervant girl are), that we hoped many of them were men of God; but a late tranſaction relative to the circuit of Liſburn, has left us without any pretext in favour of ſo happy a proceeding; therefore, if they are good men let them ſhew it to the world, by reprobating their brethrens late unwarrantable and unſcriptural conduct to the thiry-two men in office, as you term them) as they have happily hit on the very way of proving the truth of our addreſs to the people, and of giving the lie to your remarks.

You proceed—"On weighing the matter, however, I judged, &c." It would have been well had you firſt adjuſted the ſcales, and wiped away every grain of ſelf-adulation, bigotry to party, and party meaſures; and then weighed and judged it in the Scripture ſcales of juſtice and truth. Such might have been profitable to the preachers and us. If this has been the caſe (for we will not call you a liar as you have done us

more than once), it ſhall appear in the ſequel. You ſay,—"the Addreſs is gone out into the world, and will they not wholly ceaſe to hear, or ſhould a few venture to attend upon their miniſtry, will they not in all probability come prejudiced by the evil report brought up by the addreſſers againſt the preachers; and ſo inſtead of receiving the meſſage as from God, will they not regard them as a body of proud deſigning men?" We anſwer, that in no inſtance does a man appear in ſo eminent a point of view, as when he wipes away every thing which either malevolence or miſtake may have laid againſt his character; when he, by a firm and open diſplay of his conduct and rectitude of his actions, puts his miſtaken, ſecret, or public enemy to the bluſh. Now this is an eaſy method; let the preachers do ſo, and all will be well: thus will they riſe in the eſteem of the people; and inſtead of any coming prejudiced againſt, they will come prepoſſeſſed in their favour: they will be conſtrained to acknowledge them as humble, undeſigning, ſimple men, who on being called to give an account of their ſtewardſhip, as the ſervants of Chriſt and the ſervants of the people, ſatisfied every lawful requeſt, and baniſhed every reaſon of doubt and fear. Now would not this be as good as your way of *weighing and judging matters?* Would not this make the leaſt enemies, gain the moſt friends, and be bleſt of God to their ſouls, and the ſouls of the people? You may endeavour to ſtifle the enquiry for the preſent moment; but you will not be able to ſuſpend it long. We would be ſorry to imagine for a moment, that there are no more men in the connexion, but thoſe who have been expelled, who dare be honeſt enough to put their hands to ſo juſt a cauſe, and to ſave it from the ruin which the Conference is faſt bringing on; and had you been their *real friend* you would not have written in their behalf. It was wrong to defend them, and it was badly done: thus you have hurt them two ways. Men are liable to err, and ſhould not be above the advice or lawful reſtraint of their brethren, who were, under God, nurſing fathers to them. They were once all humility and teachableneſs: now does it prove either ſincerity or growth in grace; or does it teſtify of grace, that when they have gotten a little out of that way, and more power in the connexion, that they turn it againſt the people, and, in a haughty imperious tone, tell their benefactors—We are not amenable to you: it is to the Conference, Sirs, the Conference that we are accountable! This, and ſuch, is the language they uſe to their brethren. Now

are you right in supporting such anti-gospel proceedings? You say again, "It is thus the servants of the Lord are held out to the world." No, Sir, it is to the Methodists we have made our complaints. What has the world to do with the matter? You, Sir, give the sore blow and the loud cry. If the world knows any thing of the matter, it must have come through your side of the question. One of the preachers on the Belfast circuit, a Dan. M'M——n, handed our Address to a public company, into the hands of persons not Methodists, and sat by sneering till it was read; which was a display of his ignorance of the rules of delicacy, and of his mistaken confidence. You go on—"But can you, who were brought to God by their ministry, receive it?" Yes, they can receive the truth. Would you turn it out of doors with so specious a pretext as this? You are telling the people, they must not believe them fallible, as they had been brought to God by their ministry. Now, if bringing a soul to Christ be a mark of infallability, many of those men, of which the thirty-two were a part, have been effectual in the hand of God, in bringing more of the people you are addressing to Jesus, than all the preachers put together. For the truth of this, we appeal to every impartial Methodist in this kingdom. Therefore you ought, and with more reason, to have told them to hear the men who ran through wet and cold to profit them, without money and without price. Now, have you never heard of men, whose ministry has been evidenced as much as theirs, that have erred in points of discipline? Gal. chap. ii. 1—15. How then can you say to the people, you must not receive any timely warning from your brethren; "I judge your souls must recoil at it, and say with me, the usefulness of these men must be injured, if not wholly lost, to such as we were before we heard them?" These are high sounding words, but they will not serve your purpose, for the people will judge for themselves. The people are sensible that their usefullness has been evidently declining, and that nothing but a speedy return to God can save the cause from ruin.——Therefore, we not only desire to reply to you, but also to address our Brethren who are jealous for the cause of God, (into whose hands this may fall), and who know that it can only be hurt by the Preachers acting as of a distinct interest from the people, and denying them their necessary weight in the connection. This evidently is the case. Hence we are not now directed to look into our Bibles for the rules of discipline,

but to that high-ſounding word, the Conference.* Thus they are ſapping the Church at the very foundation, by ſaying, "We preach the former doctrines"—A cant phraſe, and a ſure way of producing a ſpeedy fall. You declare againſt railing on your part. Whether your pamphlet be free from this, and your party from the ſpirit of perſecution, your neighbours ſhall judge.

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* Our Brethren need not be aſtoniſhed at this expreſſion, when we tell them that they are not only to look to the Conference for the rules of diſcipline, but likewiſe for Doctrine too. In the minutes of Conference for 1798, P. 28, you may find the following queſtion :—

Queſtion.—Can any thing more be done to guard againſt improper Preachers getting admittance into our Connexion ?

Anſwer.—In the examination of the Candidates, let each be required to anſwer any queſtion the Preſident may aſk him, reſpecting the doctrines contained in the eight volumes of Sermons, which Mr. Weſley left in his will to the Preachers.

Would our humble advice be received by the Conference, it ſhould be from no leſs authority than Divine Revelation—*In* MALICE *be ye Children*; *but in* UNDERSTANDING *be ye Men.* The queſtion to the Candidates for the Miniſtry, is not, What general knowledge have you of the word of God, and of the grand doctrines contained therein ? But he is *required* to anſwer *any queſtion* that may be aſked by the Preſident, reſpecting the *doctrines* contained in the *eight volumes of Sermons.* It is neceſſary to obſerve here, that the Preachers themſelves are not agreed upon ſome *particular* points of doctrine contained in Mr. Weſley's Sermons. So that the Candidate knows not what *queſtions* may be aſked him about doctrines. It all depends upon what Preacher is Preſident the year he is received into full Connexion. No Preacher (we think) will undertake to prove that all the points of doctrine contained in Mr. Weſley's Sermons are agreeable to the Analogy of Faith, as *believed* and *taught* by the body of Methodiſt Preachers in the old Connexion. If we are called upon publicly to prove this aſſertion, we promiſe to point out particular paſſages in the eight volumes of ſermons, in which they ſay there are plain inconſiſtencies in point of doctrine. But we ſhall forbear to enlarge upon this, as we ſee their motive in making this law, viz. To revere the memory of him who has been the inſtrument, in the hand of God, in the converſion of thouſands. We wiſh to honour him too; but to do it in ſuch a manner that will not *diſgrace his memory*, and render us *ridiculous* in the eyes of the judicious of all perſuaſions. If Mr Weſley was living, he would not thank theſe gentlemen for the ſtigma of INFALLIBILITY which they fix upon him, (large minutes, page 52,) "I am no Pope—the Pope affirms that every Chriſtian muſt do all he bids, and *believe* all he ſays, under pain of damnation I never affirmed any thing that bears any, the moſt diſtant, reſemblance to this."

Our advice is, be cool and keep your temper, for you have more truth and more men to combat with, than you and the Preachers were at first aware of, otherwise you would not have acted so rashly. You insinuate that we were "wickedly acting under a mask;" were "paying no respect to the venerable John Wesley," &c. An excellent mode to prepare the minds of the people for the Bull of Conference. But your deceit is now unmasked, and reprobated by every impartial mind. Now in order to set this matter in a fair point of view, bear with us while we use the following simile:—A number of persons, their ancestors' legitimate offspring, have held (say seventeen centuries) a goodly inheritance, as joint heirs; all that could raise the imagination, charm the mind, and satisfy every lawful appetite, may be found in it. To prevent disputes in succeeding generations, the good Donor hath left in the body of the will the landmarks and the proper boundaries of the lots of each of the joint heirs, saying, thus far shalt thou come and no farther. The present occupiers, in looking over the will, see with concern that a number of their fellow heirs have removed the landmarks, trespassed on the boundaries, and made inroads on the different lots. The sufferers are uneasy; they consult with each other; they agree to complain privately to the aggressors; their attempt is fruitless; their complaints are treated with contempt, inattention, or both!—They then agree to address the whole of the inheritors, and to apprise them of the danger. It is done—but, astonishing! one of them flies to an eminence, raises his front, stiffens his neck, snatches the trumpet, and blows the shrill alarm. "Brethren, be blind to their cause and deaf to the sound of their complaints; give them no place in your heart; "let your souls recoil at the thought;" those men are troublers of the inheritance. If they see reason of complaint, let them depart from the happy soil; they are unworthy a part with us; away with such fellows, they want to change the laws of the inheritance, to grasp at the portion which is ours, and to destroy the peace of the once happy place!" Now, Brethren, would the above person deserve the name of a man of justice or candour, would not this adage be suitable to him? "There is none so blind as he who will not see;" but know this, that the ways of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth all his doings. Prov. 5. 21. The connection is this inheritance; the 32 men in office have seen the existing grievances, they have complained privately to the preachers—this was fruitless; we are not amenable to you, was their answer, if they deigned to give one. They then

addressed the stewards and leaders, &c. but lo! John Johnson flies to an eminence in the church, snatches the quill, writes his remarks, publishes them to the Methodists, and tells them that they must be deaf to the complaints of the sufferers; that they must treat them with disdain, and in an indirect manner tells them that they must not judge for themselves, that he must do it for them; and inforces it with as much confidence as Euclid would do one of his axioms, "I speak from knowledge, they from books." Yes, we speak from the books called the Law and the Testimony; by these we will be judged. But you are speaking from your blind attachment to the Conference and its mandates, or probably from those ideas formed of it, when the very soul of it was love to God, and love to man. Thus far for your age and experience. In the 3d page and 3d paragraph, "You tell us we should have laid these complaints before the Conference;" well, we have done so, and received an answer which we shall take notice of hereafter.* This far we might have expected from the preachers and you, that as you were so forward in teaching us our duty, you ought to have inforced it by example. But it seems you teach more than you practice, as the Pharasees of the times; for you say, and do not. In page 4th you have hit upon your favourite string; the enchanting sound strikes the powers of your soul; you begin to weigh, and you touch the balance with the magnet of self-adulation. As the preponderance is much to that side, your balance is the balance of deceit. Brother, to be plain with you, more than the men in office have long seen that the love of praise is your fault. Your age and place has deprived many of your brethren of an opportunity of letting you know it; moreover, access was hard to be found, unless a little of this was served up as the price of an interview; but as you have providentially opened the way yourself, and as you seem to be growing in the principle, we pray you, in the name of Jesus Christ, examine and cut it off, lest it prove of more real weight than many grass-hoppers. In this page you

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* Wonderful indeed! that Mr Johnson has forgot that we applied to the Conference the two years before we published our Address; and also to the English Conference; but to no purpose. Now, Sir, Did you *ever* know the Conference to grant us any privilege which we requested, that was both reasonable and scriptural. Nay, so far from this, that when the Trustees throughout England, met at the time of Conference, in 1797, and sent in a resolution, that the preachers ought to admit delegates to assist in transacting the affairs of the connection, they *unanimously* rejected it!

give us a long detail of your great service, both as a travelling preacher, and likewise since you became superannuated. You also tell us of the great *cheerfulness* with which you have supported the Methodist Itinerant Preachers for many years.—With respect to your *cheerfulness* we can say but very little. Some of the preachers who have been entertained at your house know much better than we. To reveal what they have said upon this subject would do us no good, but might hurt those who expect to be benefited by your future hospitality.

You likewise observe, "in the year 1771, I settled at Liscburn, where I have freely preached, as I have freely received; and the greatest part of those years preached as much as ALL THE PREACHERS, not as a burthen, but as the greatest honour that can possibly be put on mortal man." We must confess that we feel ourselves at a loss to comprehend the meaning of this passage; and therefore we shall pass it by. For how is it possible that you should have preached, as *much as all the preachers?*

This one thing we know, that as a preacher, there was a chasm in your labours of about three years—soon after you married Widow Nobb;—wherein you very seldom preached at all, and (perhaps) did not meet in Class once in six months. Pray what were *all the preachers* doing during this time?—God grant that this open reproof, which the Scriptures affirm to be better than secret love, may be blessed to you, and all whom this may concern. In the latter part of the 4th page, you proceed to shew the extensiveness of the preacher's labours, &c.—Well, whoever denied that Mr. Wesley, and many of the holy men with him, did great service to mankind?

But you miss the mark here; many of the modern preachers do not tread in their humble paths; they followed Christ;—these men glory in the Conference, and in the accummulation of wealth, and despise their brethren and their advice; they are building on other mens foundation with unsubstantial materials, and their works will be burned. The day is coming that will declare it! But granting your plea to be right, was it a fault worthy such anathemas and exclusion, to tell them of their faults privately, and when that failed to reprove them more publicly—Why not see their errors and strive to mend them? *He who being often reproved, and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

Your animadversions on our prayers and supplications, proves that you think them among those which are an abomination to the Lord. You have not *weighed* this right—we shall assist

you, and will take the ſame ſcripture balance you have choſen;—and having brought it to its centre, from which you had wreſted it, we will commit our all to its deciſion. The preachers "were firſt in their own cauſe" and you want to make them "juſt." The thirty-two men "came and ſearched them" and *have found you out alſo*; and have pointed out your ſecret fault, that you may ſee, amend, and profit by the reproof. Ah! Sir, how could you prevail on yourſelf to tell the people, that we never admoniſhed the preachers *privately*. Is there one man in the connection, any way acquainted with the matter who can believe you? Our brethren know you to be wrong here alſo. What had we to expect from men, who would ſay with Mr. Wood, "I hope their addreſs and they will meet with the contempt they deſerve," at a time when it was not written.

Theſe are the men who would hear no reproof, whom you ſeem determined to defend; and make it an unpardonable crime to withſtand, or even to ſee a fault in them. You proceed with your remarks on that part of our addreſs, which complains of the preacher's changing and neglecting Mr. Weſley's mode of diſcipline; and you ſay, "when I read the above, it made me wonder. I *knew well* what diſcipline was eſtabliſhed in Mr. Weſley's days." Pray, Sir, what *eſtabliſhed* rules of diſcipline had Mr. Weſley? We venture to affirm—NONE. But you may ſay, "have I not given you Mr. Weſley's rules in his own words" Yes, you have given us what you call the *particular* office of an aſſiſtant in eight particulars—Such as 1ſt—to expound morning and evening? 2d. To meet the Society, &c. Now we will appeal to every man of common ſenſe—and ſay, is the *particular* office of an aſſiſtant, "in expounding the Word morning and evening," &c. the whole economy of Methodiſm?

Is it poſſible that the whole of Mr. Weſley's Rules for Diſcipline could be contained in ten lines of your pamphlet?—You have truſted ſo much to your *knowledge*, that you would not be at the trouble of looking into Mr. Weſley's writings to find out his Rules of Diſcipline. For you ſay, "I *knew well* what diſcipline was eſtabliſhed in Mr. Weſley's days." As you were writing for the good of the public, you ought to have conſidered that your memory was a little impaired; and if you had ſpoke "from books," we would have thought no worſe of you. However, if you knew Mr Weſley's diſcipline, you have omitted to inform us of it; and therefore we will excuſe you, as we *know it well*. Mr. Weſley's plan was to follow

the openings of Providence. "From the beginning (ſays he) I have been careful in all things to follow the openings of Divine Providence." In a Plain Account of the People called Methodiſts, in a Letter to a Friend, p. 12, you may find the following paſſage:—Obj. "I do not underſtand this changing one thing after the other continually." Mr. Weſley anſwers, "With regard to theſe little prudential matters, we are "continually changing one thing after another;" by this means we declare them all to be *merely prudential*, not eſſential, not of divine inſtitution. Hereby we prevent, ſo far as in us lies, their growing formal and dead. We are always open to conviction, willing to be wiſer every day than we were before, and to change whatever we can for the better." After reading this paſſage, can you ſay, "If the above diſcipline be ſet aſide, I know it not, neither have I ſeen the new one inſtituted in its place by the Conference?" You cannot but know that the Conference in 1797, publiſhed a pamphlet containing eighty pages. They have retained only a part of Mr. Weſley's rules, viz. ſuch as are calculated to ſerve their own intereſt; but they have made up this deficiency by adding a number of new ones, made by the preachers ſince his death: and therefore you may well ſay, "That the eſtabliſhed diſcipline has been carefully attended to, I will not take upon me to defend."—Suffer us to aſk, What then, Sir, has been the cauſe of your "wonder?" We think we have much more cauſe to *wonder* that you could defend an *error*, the exiſtence of which you deny in one ſentence and acknowledge it in the next. But this is not the only inconſiſtency which appears in your pamphlet. Inconſiſtencies which the age, experience, and knowledge you arrogate to yourſelf, might have prevented you from committing. You once thought it (you ſaid) an honour and bleſſing to be of that ſociety of men. You examined the juſtneſs of their principles, and admitted their complaints to be founded on facts. "That Providence had ſome how caſt me among them, where I mean to abide," were your own words to a preacher, who was exerciſing his authority in the connection, and hurling the *new made mandates of the Conference* on the people. But you were then in danger of loſing your office. You wanted aid!

In page 7, your remark concerning what we have ſaid reſpecting the ſuperanuated preachers, runs thus: "Here the Addreſſers miſtake, as reading without book; I ſpeak from knowledge." What you mean by *reading* without book, we know not. You may probably unfold the matter at ſome future

period: but, perhaps, this is your common way of "weighing and judging matters;" that is, (in plain English) you would have us to imagine that you stand possessed of all the knowledge in the world, at least that part of it which concerns the matter in dispute. Your own words confirm this: "I speak from knowledge." With humble submission to you, we think it might have been well for you to have had recourse, at times, to books. In the minutes of Conference for 1796, we find Mr. Hopper received the sum of 30l. 3s. Mrs. Blair, (widow of the late Andrew Blair, who died at Dublin) received the sum of 16l.---The former of these is a man of considerable property. If we be rightly informed, he has not less than 150l. annually, arising from his own estates. He has scarce a relation living, but a wife; while the latter is a poor widow, who receives the *enormous* sum of 16l. per annum, for the support of herself and six fatherless children. Now, as you are an old preacher, and have already *revealed* to us, what you call the *Secrets of Conference*, if they have any SECRET LAW among them which proves the justness of this manner of distributing the public money, we shall be thankful for an extract of it, when you undertake an answer to these few remarks.

You say, "Mr. Wesley's desire was that the necessary sum should be voted every Conference." In this he acted as a prudential Steward; but his *Law of Necessity* is not now regarded by the present preachers. Nothing less than a fixed Annuity will serve them. Hence you tell us, page 8, "the preachers in the year 1792 (the second Conference after Mr. Wesley's death) thought it best to have the allowance *fixed* to 1l. per year, for every year above twelve." And page 10, you add, "better a few should get that they do not need, than the greatest part should want." Now, Sir, as you charge us with "tearing up Mr. Wesley's mode of discipline by the roots," and also of "impeaching the *wisdom* and *disinterestedness* of that venerable man," suffer us to ask you a few plain questions. 1. Is the above law one made by Mr. Wesley, or one coined by the preachers since his death?—2. Would the admitting of delegates into the Conference, to have a voice in the management of their own affairs, to see that *their monies* be applied according to the necessities of the persons for whom they were collected, have a tendency to destroy Mr. Wesley's scriptural, Christian *rule of necessity*, or that *fixed* and *anti-methodistical law* of 1l. per year? So that if a person travels thirty or forty years, he can *demand* from the Conference 30 or 40l. per year,

whether he has any need for it or not, during life.* 3. If Mr. Wesley had been living, do you think we should have found in the minutes (1796) THOMAS BRISCO, 30l.—the master of a large boarding-school in the city of Chester, JOHN EASTON, 33l.—MARGARET SHAW, 30l. who has an income to support her enough for the first lady in the land? If you *calmly* and *seriously* consider these things, we have no doubt but your answer will be like that of our Lord's, *I trow not.* But here you may be ready to say, "May not the preachers do what they will with their own money?" Will you not allow them the priviledge of a man in common life? If we allowed your statement to be right, we must of necessity admit of the inference you draw, viz. that a man has a right to do what he will with his own. But we deny that the money in the preachers' fund is their own. This, as you say, "we hope to prove from

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* We might have added also, that his wife can demand the same sum as long as she survives him. To this you say, p. 9, "In all probability her lamp is as low as his, and needs the greater supply; and as his partner goes hand in hand with him to the grave, the fund will soon be eased of that which causes so much discontent." So far so good. But you have omitted to tell us one thing—namely—That some of these *worn out labourers* feel inclined to take to themselves a young girl to wife to comfort them in their old age, "This (as you say) we hope to prove from matter of fact." What would the young girl which old Duncan Wright married in London about two or three years before his death have cost the connection if this fixed law of 1792 had been made but one year sooner? Why, perhaps not less than 30l. per annum. Whether "her lamp was as low as his" let them judge who knew them. We do not wish to enlarge in this note, or else we would mention several others.—There are two women mentioned in yonr Minutes of Conference for the present year, which are both married again;—but because they have been the wives of travelling preachers they still receive their former husbands salary. The one is Widow Butterfield, who is the wife of a local preacher that has settled in business, who never had any children, either by the former or present husband. The other is Widow Marshall, who is now the wife of one of your travelling preachers. She received this last conference 18l. on her former husband's account; though when Mr Marshall married her, she was a lady of 2000l. fortune. Now, did you "*weigh* and *judge*" of these matters before you said, "I hope, from a just statement, the *eyes* of those who have something to spare, will, at their death, entrust them with a small part of what they have to support the worn-out preachers." We think that neither the *eyes* nor the conscience of those "who have something to spare" will suffer them to leave their Lord's money for the support of the Preachers' Fund, while it is governed by its present *inequitable laws.*

matter of fact." In the minutes of Conference for 1796, what is contributed for the preachers' fund? Answer:

		£.	s.	d.
IN ENGLAND.				
Subscriptions by the people,	-	745	15	3
Ditto by the preachers	-	325	10	0
IN IRELAND,	-	178	12	0
In all,	-	1249	17	3

This is what the preachers tell you is their own money!!!

We do not mention these things, as if we grudged the old labourers of a comfortable maintenance, after all their toil and pains---No, we wish them to be made comfortable as long as God shall spare them in this world. But it grieves us to see them depart from Mr. Wesley's Rule of *Necessity*, and be anxious for a fixed annuity; not only for themselves, but likewise for their wives; and not only for them, but for the man, or men, who would take them in marriage again and again. No matter whether they be fools or wise—holy or unholy—professor or prophane—Jew or Gentile—The poor Methodist must pay the annuity, and help them to carry on their jokes. Now, in the presence of your Maker, how could you tell the people, that the expelled men "tore up Mr Wesley's Discipline by the roots?" And how can you take upon you to espouse the cause of such men? *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* Prov. 17, 15.

In the latter part of the 8th page, you dwell upon the merits, travels, labours, &c. of the superannuated preachers. That many of them has been good men, and have been made abundantly useful in their day and generation we never denied. Nor, but that they should be comfortably provided for; this we have already affirmed. But you delight to speak of one thing, while we are speaking of another---You say, "the exigencies of the times require more than usual."---Yes, no doubt, but they may be felt by all (the excluded men not excepted) Now if the preachers set no value on money, why do they not slacken in their demands in these distressing times? and like the industrious bee, feed on that which they have already hoarded up? According to their own account, they have about 6000l. already amassed; and when we examine the minutes of the Conference for 1796---97, and 98---we find that the Subscription to the preacher's fund, amounts to 300 or 400l. per year more than the expenditure---and although many

of the demands upon this fund are unreasonable, yet the above surplus appears on the minutes.

Your next attack upon us is, for asserting that the preachers require the money that has been borrowed from their fund to support the work of God. For proof of this, *to the law and the testimony*---In the minutes of Conference for 1796, page 35, is the following paragraph:

"It appears from the state of the preachers fund, now laid before us, that the amount, if in our hands, or in any of the funds, from whence regular interest would have been paid, would have been 6000l ---But this whole sum (except about 70l.) is all expended in the payment of Mr. Wesley's debts, (who is now *impeaching* the *wisdom*, or honesty of Mr. Wesley?) and in carrying on the work of God before and since his death." In the minutes for the same year, page 22, Rule 17---"No part of this fund shall be applied to *any* other purposes than those directed by these Rules---And all monies that *have been borrowed from it*, shall be repaid with legal interest."

In your pamphlet, page 10, paragraph first, you say, "the Address makes a great outcry about the four thousand pounds they demand, (the preachers), with interest---Justice would require it, and mercy would help to refund it; not that I *think* it will *ever* be asked off the public." Now, Sir, if *you think* the preachers are such a set of men, that you *cannot believe* them after publishing to the world such resolutions as the above---Why do you blame us for the few things which we have said against the preachers—Things which are far less scandalous in their nature than your assertion.

Page 11, you proceed on an estimation of the books and printing utensils, left by Mr. Wesley; and after many divisions and sub-divisions, you attempt to prove, that they were valued at too high a rate. If the bargain was so bad, why were the preachers so fond of it? Sometimes it is said, they who would buy my goods despise them, and indeed when we read your remarks—Solomon's words came forcibly to our minds—"*The buyer saith it is nought, it is nought, but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.*"

We fear it is the case with them; from whence this deficiency hath arisen you have given us no satisfactory information, unless you want us to believe the contrary of what our eyes have seen and our pockets felt; that is, that their books are sold at near one third too high a rate: to this the people submitted, thinking the profits were disposed as heretofore.—We have reason now to believe the contrary, and that the

Preachers having sunk so many thousands into it, have made it a great source of wealth to themselves.—You proceed, "I cannot believe Mr. Wesley foresaw any such consequences as the Address represents; had that been the case, he had too much wisdom to have frustrated his plan with his eyes open"—What wonderful unbelief, presumptive argument, mighty and convincing reasoning is here! Now does all you have said alter the case? Does this prove that they have not wrested them out of the hands of the Trustees—out of the hands of the people—and out of the channels which the Providence of God had put them into?—Ah no! the contrary appears: had you wondered that men possessing the Love of God, (to whom Mr. Wesley had been a Friend and Guide) could be guilty of such ingratitude, and thus tread on the designs of their father, patron, and instructor: we would not have wondered so much at you, but it is said the wise man wonders at nothing; you only wanted one thing to have in your Pamphlet, the last wonder in the world—that is, that the Methodist Conference is become an INQUISITION." *

But you seem determined to fight their battle at any rate, when you cannot argue your point; you deny the principle; and when you cannot meet plain truth with good argument, you kick it out of doors, as is if these were sufficient grounds for the Connexion to rest its judgment on. How would you stand now before your Maker, should he inquire who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Job. 38. 2.—Was Mr. Wesley to arise from the dead, sit in his former place, and look over the different acts, made there since his decease; how great would be his astonishment, and how severe would his reproof be? Might he not say; ye treacherous dealers, is it thus ye have dealt with my Children? I left you the Overseers of the Flock which Christ purchased by the shedding of his own blood; but ye have departed from the instructions I have given you: I left you my Notes on the New Testament, that ye might the better know how to act your

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* We would not have our friends be surprised at us using the word Inquisition, as we have no less authority for it than the venerable Mr John Wesley, who, "*though dead yet speaketh.*" (See his note on Acts xxv. v. 16. "*It is not the custom of the Romans.*"—How excellent a rule to condemn no one unheard! a rule, which, as it is common to all nations, (courts of *Inquisition* only excepted) so it ought to direct our proceedings in all affairs, not only in public but private life. O! ye Methodists, read and judge!

part; but ye have not obeyed them, farther than they suited your own ends: You have been pushing with the horn and with the shoulder.* You are hastening into the paths of superstition; instead of continuing the servants of the people, you are become their "Governors" and Lords: Your light is almost gone out; my God will remove your candlestick, unless you speedily repent; therefore erase your unscriptural laws, call in your bulls and mandates, confess your sins and forsake them, and you shall find mercy!

This or such, would be the language of the Apostolic Father of Zion's Converts. You proceed: "I absolutely deny the Preachers in the scuffle did ever make the property Mr. Wesley left of books their joint property; this I hope to prove from matter of fact. First, if the books are their own joint property, they can dispose of them and the profits for their own use, and will leave their share of them at their death to whoever they please; a number of them have since died, and not one has yet acted thus, neither have their widows or children laid any claim to any part of the stock, nor the smallest part allowed to them—which must have been the case, had the books been their own joint property. A second proof is, no excluded Preacher has claimed any share in the stock."

Thus you strive to prove your point, that the Preachers could not make the books their joint property, according to the rules of moral justice; but that they have done so, contrary to these rules, we do affirm. We have it substantiated from their own words; one of them, a Mr. Wood, "thanked God that they were now their own property." You have therefore denied what you know to be fact, or you would not have taken upon you to defend a principle with which you are unacquainted, either of which militate against your veracity as a Christian. Your first argument proves nothing: you might as well affirm that the capital of the Bank of England is not the joint property of the Proprietors, because they have not willed it to the Great Mogull; they could not divert it into a more profitable channel: it therefore proves their wisdom to keep it there, much time has not elapsed since they became the inheritors of it: what they may do at a future

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* O! ye Methodist Preachers, hear ye the word of the Lord.—Ezek. 34, 21, 22. "*Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.*"

period you have not told us; nor, can we inform you: who knows what a day may bring forth? In a ſhort time they have done as great things, and we have no doubt, but they will uſe it as they think it may beſt ſerve themſelves. Your next argument ſeems to have as little weight: few Preachers have been turned out—moreover, they act for each other, they abſolve an individual among themſelves for far more, than they would turn out thirty of the people, particularly if it touched at their own intereſts. If you will not ſee the truth of this, you will compel us to prove it at a future time; for loves ſake, and the ſake of our Brethren, we now omit it.* Know ye not, that to incur their diſpleaſure, is to incur the diſpleaſure of Principalities and Powers, and, that even to ſpeak of their ſecret tranſactions, brings on a confiſcation of property to the excluded Preachers. How can they help themſelves, when turned out into the world, deſtitute of means to ſupport them? Much leſs, to go to law with thoſe who poſſeſs thouſands, and who would deal it out plentifully, in ſupport of their own cauſe.† The conteſt then would be too ſerious; what ſome of them may do at a future time, we know not, and though they cannot, nor have not, this we know, that the law of God is the ſame; and as they preach Righteouſneſs to others, they ought to practice it; and give them a ſhare of that which you ſay "their labours in writing, and induſtry in ſelling, has gained."

Your congratulations and thanks, will undoubtedly be received with pleaſure by the Conference; as you have ſent them gilded with a golden promiſe—with another ſound of the trumpet of ſelf-adulation. You are about to give alms; and, it is blown in the ſtreets. A man hears no praiſe when in the duſt—better have it before you go hence—well, you have your reward. They have accepted and inſured it, by enrolling you among the Superannuated Preachers; hence, you may derive both *honour* and *profit!* Now have they not enough to ſupport them? It would, we think, be more acceptable to your Maker, if you would diſtribute a little of the many hundreds you have at uſe, among the poor Saints; who know not what it is to

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* If we be called upon publicly to anſwer again, we will point out the particular characters.

† For the truth of this, we refer you to the late tranſactions of your *worthy* preſident the Rev. Doctor Coke, who, in his language could throw away conſiderable ſums of money to oppoſe ſpeak with them the Truſtees, at Briſtol and Birſtal, in Yorkſhire.

live, as the Superannuated Preachers do—but this would only be recorded in Heaven, and on the hearts of the poor—the other will be written in the capital, and publiſhed throughout the lands; ſo much added to our funded property, by our late *Dear Mr. Johnſon's Legacy!* Every Man is a friend to him that giveth gifts. Prov. 19. 6.

You ſay, page 13th, "I never knew the merits of the lawſuit with the truſtees of the new chapel, and do ſuppoſe the Addreſſers know little more than *me*; but let it be what it will, I much doubt the concluſion in the addreſs." Why have you taken upon you to defend it? Surely a judge and impartial jury knew the merits We will not "rejudge their juſtice." Now as the preachers were often with you when you were writing your remarks, did you never aſk them? did they never inform you? It was your place to gain the information; it was theirs to give it. But you thought there was too much about it, and you draw the following deception, and lurked behind it—"Now for men of ſenſe to give up congregations for empty houſes, and hope to gain money by turning off the people, is wonderful indeed, and too abſurd for any thinking man to believe." Now how ſincere were you when writing this; could you raiſe up your heart to your Maker, and implore his bleſſing to attend it; or did you anſwer it to the beſt of your knowledge? Ah! ſo aged and yet dealing in quirks! The juſt man walketh in his integrity. Prov. 20. 7.

Bleſſed be the Lord, we perceive how futile the above is; it is like the flaſh of a meteor, ſoon ſpent and little damage done. The rich man is wiſe in his own conceit, but the poor that hath underſtanding ſearcheth him out. Prov. 28th, 11th. Now we ſhall ſet you right once more. It may be the graſshopper has approached your ſtudy, threatened you with its ponderous weight, and puzzled you with its chattering ſong.

We have no reaſon to believe, that many of the preachers are deſtitute of ſenſe, nor that they love to take ſhadows for ſubſtances; we have intimated the contrary in our addreſs; but had the preachers gotten the houſes into their hands, the people muſt have received their privileges at ſuch expences, or under theſe reſtrictions which beſt ſuited their common intereſt; beſides, we are not ignorant of the emolument which muſt have ariſen to them, had they ſucceeded in this, as the ſeats are all rented to the people in England, and ſome of the houſes [illegible] 20l. annually, or more, in proportion to their ſituation [illegible] This would have been an acquiſition of no ſmall [illegible] and another great ſtep towards the eſtabliſhment

puſhed
therefore
judge between

of that hierarchy which they have been grasping at since the death of Mr. John Wesley. Thus we have explained what you pretended not to understand; what you term "wonderful indeed, and too absurd for any thinking man to believe."—— "Wo unto him (saith the prophet Isiah) who putteth light for darkness, and darkness for light." You go on, "by what I have read very lately, it is proved that the trustees can break their trust, though under their hand and seal, and give the chapels to whom they please, and wipe their mouths and say they have done no evil!" This appears to be a very serious charge; but you have not told us who is the author of the piece you got your information from. Perhaps you refer to the trustees in England, who have taken twenty or thirty chapels from the old connection, because they refused the people a knowledge of their own affairs. How you can make it appear that they "break their trust, though under their hand and seal," because they receive preachers from the Conference of the New Connection, we cannot conceive. But you are ready to say, "I think, it is not very difficult to prove it, for they have taken many chapels from the preachers, which was settled upon the Conference, and given them to others." This reasoning appears very plausible; but let us examine it a little.

And first—Who do you mean by the *Conference?* To understand this, we must take notice of the occasion of the use of this word among us. Mr. Wesley received lay-men to assist him in spreading the cause of the Redeemer. At certain periods he called these men together, and consulted with them on various subjects: hence the result of their meetings are called by himself "Conversations between the Reverend John Wesley and others." Mr. Wesley always presided in these meetings, because he looked upon the preachers as his servants, for he could receive or expel them at his pleasure. Here, you see, who composed the Conferences of old—the employer and the employed. Now who employs and supports the preachers in these days? Certainly the people. But will the preachers in their meetings receive any of their employers to consult with them about the management of their own affairs? No. Their language is, "We are determined in the most resolved manner, and with the most unanimous spirit, to reject the plan of Delegates, in whatever shape or form it may be proposed." Hear what they say of themselves: [Minutes for 1796, page 29.] "The preachers are eminently *one body*" Now after these declarations, is it not a solecism of language to call them THE CONFERENCE? If you would speak with

any propriety, you muſt call them a Dutch Ariſtocracy. The New Connection have an equal number of preachers and people to compoſe their Conference. Hear the title of their minutes: "Minutes of Converſations between travelling Preachers and Delegates from the People late in connection with the Rev. Mr. Weſley." Now aſk yourſelf which is the *proper Conference?*

Secondly, What do you mean "by taking the chapels, and giving them to whom they pleaſe?" Did you ever know the truſtees take any chapel and apply it to any other purpoſe than that for which it was intended? You may be ready to ſay, Yes: Mr. Weſley's intention in having the chapels ſettled upon the deed poll, was to have them ſacred for the uſe of thoſe preachers who were in connection with him, and whoſe doctrine was agreeable to his Notes on the New Teſtament and eight volumes of Sermons. Very true. And in this the truſtees have been faithful to their truſt; for the perſons who officiate in theſe chapels are ſound in the faith, and preach the genuine doctrines of Methodiſm; and the greateſt part of them was in connection with Mr. Weſley, before one half of your preachers joined the Methodiſt Society. You proceed, page 14, to tell us of a pamphlet, containing a ſtatement of the London law-ſuit about the New Chapel, City Road. If we be rightly informed, you have this pamphlet by you. But, alas! you have not favoured us with a ſingle extract from it. Since you told us of this ſmall pamphlet, we have wiſhed very much to ſee it. As it is the preachers own account, they have probably left out the falſe appeals to Heaven, which four of them made. In order to lay claim to the premiſes, it was neceſſary for ſome identical perſons to come forward and make oath that theſe premiſes belonged to them. Now does this pamphlet, you ſpeak of, inform you that Mr. R——rs did ſo, in order to get the chapel? that Mr. Th——n did ſo, in order to ſecure the dwelling-houſe? and that Mr. Wh——d did in like manner, in order to get the foundery? and alſo the ſexton making oath that the burying ground belonged to him? We know that the preachers do not like to hear theſe things mentioned; and we can aſſure them it gives us no pleaſure to relate them; but in order to anſwer your remarks we were conſtrained to relate theſe things. If it was neceſſary we could mention more particulars about the London law-ſuit than has ever come to your knowledge. The above account, and much more, we had from a reſpectable gentleman, who was employed fourteen weeks by the truſtees upon this occaſion.—

We cannot conclude our remarks on this laſt paſſage of your's, without dropping a word of advice to thoſe truſtees into whoſe hands this may fall.

Now, brethren, if you wiſh to preſerve any chapel, or chapels you are in truſt for, ſacred for the uſe of the Old Connection, you muſt make a new deed, and put in the preachers for truſtees; or elſe, if your views of things ſhould alter, you will have it in your power to take the chapels from the old preachers, and give them to the New Connection, whoſe diſcipline is agreeable to reaſon and Scripture. But our advice to you is, keep the chapels in your own hands; let the ſociety to which they belong have them for their uſe. If you wiſh to have good preachers, keep them dependent on the people. Whenever preachers become independent, they will in time become tyrannical. If the preachers had been ſucceſsful in the London law ſuit, all other chapels and dwelling-houſes which belong to them in the three kingdoms, would have followed the ſame fate, and have been an acquiſition of not leſs than £.200,000. If the preachers act uprightly, and keep their eye ſingly fixed on God, they will never want chapels to preach in. It is no good ſign when we ſee them ſo anxious to have chapels fixed upon them; for when we ſee ſmoak, we are in general apprehenſive of fire.

And now, Sir, if you have the gentlemen of the law; or any individual among them to tax with injuſtice; as you have "ſnatched the quill," attack them; or, him as a Chriſtian openly, and reprobate ſuch conduct in whoever of them deceived their client; and as a word of advice is ſometimes profitable---we counſel you to carry more ſound argument, and have a better footing than you had in your attack againſt us, or they will argue you out of your ſenſes.

Page 15, you have given us a long detail of what you term the "Secrets of Conference." We are ſorry you have given yourſelf ſo much trouble to ſo little purpoſe; and though none of us have ſat in that conclave, we will tell you a few more; as one good turn deſerves another, it may be the parallel holds good in the relation of ſtories. Before we proceed, it appears you have been guilty of ſending out a ſtalking-horſe to deceive the people, in order to divert their minds from things which more nearly concern them---to proceed then, the preachers alone have changed Mr. Weſley's mode, reſpecting the diſtribution of the public collections. He uſed to ſend the money abroad, they keep it at home. He was kind, in giving it where it was truly wanted---they are kind, and give it to one another.

Mr. Wesley said, that no assembly but an Inquisition will judge a man unheard, and being brought *face* to *face*; that the Conference has done so, contrary to his mind, and to the law of our country, is an undoubted fact. Mr. Wesley allowed every man the liberty, both to think and speak of religious things; the preachers have made it a crime worthy exclusion, to speak of his *good old plan*; or to compare it with their *new one*—Mr. Wesley said, that the people would never submit to any body of men, as they had done to him---the preachers never asked their consent, and want them to submit to their arrogated and greater power—Now, Sir, who has been changing Mr. Wesley's mode? Have you revealed all their secrets? There are yet a few more which we can reveal, that will cast light upon the above; but as you are an old, and now a superanuated preacher, we think these are as many, as you can bear at one time.

You have been striking hard to forge the yoke for the people; but you will find some difficulty, before yon can get it on their necks. Ah! Sir, the image of the beast is arrived from Peter's; and, has found a seat with our holy fathers — You are striving to erect it; and if any man will not fall down and worship, anathemas and exclusion must attend him!

Thus in almost the end of the 18th century, the man of sin is revealed among the once holiest sect in these lands; and now their fall seems rapid; and that, from the same causes, which have overthrown the former churches, viz. a love of money and power in the preachers; whilst you have been holding out in your remarks, principles of error to divert them from seeing the impending ruin. Why should any preachers of the gospel assume such a power; is not the same God over all, and through all, and in you all?

It is not a prorogative which belongs to man, to interpose between our consciences and our God; but the preachers have done so, contrary to, and in violation of this eternal truth! As a proof that the preachers have taken to themselves the whole government of the church, we shall relate more largely their proceedings, with respect to the Lisburn petitioners; they rose from their comfortable firesides—from the hospitable company of men, who had been twenty, or thirty years their benefactors, whose hearts were ready to feel for, and whose pockets were open to supply their wants—they, as you quinkingly remark, "wiped their mouths"---shook them by the hand---rode to Dublin; (and no doubt, after solemn *fasting* and *prayer*) they accused, judged, condemned; and banished from the

Methodist Connection thirty-two of their brethren. Did they stop here? No, more appeared to them quite necessary.—1st, The people might murmur who were conscientious.—2d, The expelled men might attempt to assemble, and worship with those, who could not bear to be wrested from their persecuted brethren.---3d, To extirpate *them*, and intimidate the *rest*, was necessary; lest, they in the old Connection, should ever murmur at the preacher's future conduct.

The council sat in active thought, what means to pursue, to accomplish the above end: the powers of darkness, ever near the human heart, suggested the only possible way; the nation is in some measure agitated, point them out as JACOBINS; and at the same time openly declare your own loyalty;---thus shall ye create a jealousy in the minds of men against them---"*Report and we will report*," (Jer. 20 c. 10 v.) and victory, sure victory is ours. 'Tis done; and thus have they laid a snare for their brethren, to wrest them from their habitations, leave their wives, widows, and their children orphans; who often times ministered to their necessities, and sheltered them in time of need. Men may determine, but God, the superintender of all, disposes. Glory to him, his providence has preserved us, and his grace hath kept us in such sort, that our conduct (the only thing which declares men), puts all our enemies to the blush. We can appeal to our neighbours is not our conduct peaceable; are we not amenable to the laws. Thanks be to God, the laws of our country have provided for us that liberty they would deny; they having warned our brethren to have no communication with us, nor hear us sing and pray. Now, Sir, what have we suffered all this for? For requesting scriptural discipline in the church; defending the cause of God, and the cause of many of our brethren. The above, or such has been our crimes. We thought the spirit of persecution was quenched in the blood of the Martyrs, but from the above you may perceive it is yet alive, and the only thing which keeps down the flame, is want of power; that it is no unjust conclusion to say, could they do more, they would hurry us to Smithfield, and punish us at the stake. *

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* Perhaps you may be ready to say—this is strong language indeed; be it so; it is no stronger than true—*as certain also of your own preachers have said*;———" I hope, (says Mr. Bradburn, in his pamphlet, published in 1792) I shall ever be a determined advocate for *universal, unrestrained* liberty of conscience; and an enemy to *every species* of *coercion* in matters *purely religious*. If

Now, Sir, have you not been brandiſhing your weapon for an Antichriſtian power, and combating for an unſcriptural cauſe, and aſſumed power taken by the once ſtammering Methodiſt Preachers? who having got a little more knowledge, and better manner of addreſs, have forgot and ſtepped out of the humble path; ſnatched at the keys falling from the hand of the Pontiff; and in effect declared *we are his true ſucceſſors*

You ſay a Preacher's Wife has only 12l. per annum: now had you ſaid 13l. you would have hit on the right ſum. It is wonderful how you could forget after paying them ſo many years, and not know that the ſum is as above. But, Sir, is this all they have? We believe not. Who furniſhes them with a houſe, ſervant girl, coals, candles, mahogany chairs, beds,

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you would hinder the ſacrament by compulſion, (or prevent the people from enjoying any of their lawful rights), becauſe you do not approve of it, would you not *fine, impriſon, baniſh*, or *burn* your brother in Chriſt, ſooner than he ſhould enjoy his Chriſtian Liberty? You may ſay, no; but God knows I would not truſt you out of my power."

This ſaid Mr. B. is now become a bitter enemy to his brethren in England, becauſe they differ from him in matters "purely religious."—For proof of this, ſee The Addreſſes to the Iriſh Conference, and to F. Aſbury of America, contained in the Minutes of 179-, and ſigned Samuel Bradburn, Secretary, He there repreſents the brethren who have divided from them, as perſons that have *loſt their religion*—the *followers of Thomas Paine*—*demons of diſcord*, &c. &c.—Lord, *what is man!* *How is the fine gold become dim!* Men can ſpeculate about *liberty*, but touch their intereſt, and they will riſe and withſtand you to the face. Why there is ſuch a great change in the *language* and *conduct* of Mr. Bradburn we cannot ſay, unleſs it be, that

> *Avarice* and *age* creep on. His *reverend* mind
> Begins to grow Right Reverendly inclin'd,
> Power and preferment ſtill ſo ſweetly call,
> The voice of Heaven is never heard at all.
> Set but a tempting Biſhopric in view,
> He's ſtrictly orthodox—and loyal too;
> With equal zeal defends both Church and ſtate,
> And infidels and rebels ſhare his heat.
>
> [Dodley's Art of Preaching, 8 page.]

and other houſehold furniture? When you write again, put all theſe and more to the 12l. you ſpeak of, and be exact, for people in towns know what theſe things coſt, and who will know if your eſtimation be juſt: pray aſk your own heart, if the Preachers are right when they ſay, it is not the people but the Conference that they thank for theſe things.

You aſk, in the laſt page of your remarks, "where the preachers got their riches." We have anticipated ourſelves in ſome ſort, but there remains a ſolution yet. We anſwer, from the people, viz. the collections that are levyed from them to ſupport the different funds which are in being in the connection—to wit, the yearly collection, amounting to 1800l. per year; the Kingſwood School collection, about 1500l. per year; the preachers' fund collection, about 1200l. per year; this laſt collection, they ſay, they are not accountable to any perſon or perſons, being their own property, although not more than one third of this ſum is ſubſcribed by the preachers towards it; fourthly, the profits ariſing from the ſale of the books, which, on an average, is not leſs than 2000l. per year; the whole (as far as has come to our knowledge) amounts to no leſs a ſum than 6500l. per annum. Now, Sir, from the above fair ſtatement, you will be fully acquainted with what you pretended not to know. Now as you love information, if any of your old friends ſhould come on a tour through Ireland this year, particularly the preacher who aſſerted that Mr. Alexander Kilham got a fair trial, which is a falſe aſſertion, you can tell him in your turn, that there is nothing new, and that the expelled men in the Liſburn Circuit did not get any trial whatſoever.

We would wiſh to continue our ſubject a little longer, but for fear of ſwelling our Reply too much, as we have to pay for the printing of our pamphlet—Alas! we have no acceſs to the contingent fund. "In the laſt paragraph you ſay, you never intended this as an anſwer to the Addreſs." We think then that you were wrong in ſending it forth. "You wiſh alſo that the Addreſs had never been publiſhed." We have heard many of your ſtaunch friends alſo wiſh that you had not publiſhed yours, and that no good had ariſen from it; it was not to the purpoſe, and we are ready to think that you are of the ſame opinion by this time; however, a man is never too old to learn.

Thus, Sir, we have noticed every particular point of your Remarks, and have endeavoured to anſwer them. And to ſhew unto all thoſe into whoſe hands this Reply may fall, that we have been candid with you, we ſent you the following letter before this was ſent to the preſs:—

Lisburn, 30*th Nov.* 1798.

"DEAR SIR,

"We wish you to see an Answer to your Remarks on our Address, which we have prepared, that if you can produce any reasonable objections against any part of it you may. We will wait your attendance at Wm. Johnston's till three o'clock to-morrow; if you call then, well; if not, it will be gone to the press, and struck off immediately.

"We are, Dear Sir,
"Your's, &c.
"HUGH MURRAY.
"WM. JOHNSTON."

"*Thursday night,*
"*7 o'clock.*"

About nine o'clock we received Mr. Johnson's answer, which is as follows:—

"GENTLEMEN,

"I received your note, in which you give me an offer of objecting to any part of your answer to my remarks. I shall decline the offer, as I shall give myself no farther trouble about any thing you publish, unless you publish a confutation of those remarks. If you can prove them false, I will publish to the world my error; but any thing that reflects on me I shall bear with patience, leaving you and your publication to him that will judge between us at the last day.

"I am, Gentlemen,
"Your humble servant,
"JOHN JOHNSON.

"*Thursday evening, three quarters after eight.*"

And now, dear Sir, a few words more, and we shall close this our Reply to you. As we have principally answered your Remarks by quotations from the writings of your own preachers, and the minutes of your Conferences, we hope you will let them have that due weight which they deserve; and should you, or any of your friends, be inclined to make any further remarks on any thing we have advanced, we are ready to meet you on the broad basis of reason, Scripture, and the practice of the church in the purest ages of Christianity.

(Signed by)

WILLIAM BROWN, Preacher,
DUNCAN LIVINGSTON, Preacher,
JOHN M'CLURE, Preacher,
HU. MURRAY, Gen. Steward, Leader and Trustee,
WM. JOHNSTON, Trustee,
} The Committee.

WILLIAM BLACK, Leader and Trustee,
JAMES RICHEY, Leader,
WM. PALMER, Leader,
JOHN SCANDERET, Leader,
FRANCIS HAMILTON, Leader,
PAT. CUNNINGHAM, Leader and Trustee,
JOSEPH CHERRY, Leader and Trustee,
MOSES BUCHANNAN, Leader,
JOHN KELLY, Steward,
JAMES WRIGHT, Leader,
THOMAS BRADSHAW, Leader and Trustee,
ROBERT LILLEY, Leader,
JOHN PEARCE, Leader,
ROBERT BAILLEY, Leader,
WILLIAM COBURN, Leader,
WILLIAM M'DOWEL, Leader,
PHELIX CUNNINGHAM, Steward,
JOHN WHISTON, Leader.
NATHANIEL DICKEY, Leader and Trustee,
WILLIAM WOODS, Leader,
WILLIAM JOHNSTON, Steward, Moorside.
THOMAS M'PHERSON, Leader,
CHARLES HALL, Leader,
WILSEY CHAPMAN, Leader.

Lisburn, Dec. 5, 1798.

An Affectionate Addreſs, &c.

VERY DEAR BRETHREN,

WE have no doubt but you have heard of our expulſion from your Connexion, by the Preachers lately aſſembled in Dublin. As we have no quarrel with *you*, we hope you will bear with *us*, whilſt we lay before you a fair ſtatement of the matter in diſpute.

Perhaps, you may have gathered ſome tolerable idea of it, from the foregoing Reply to Mr. Johnſon's Remarks; but there are many other things neceſſary for you to know, which we could not (with propriety) inſert in it.

Though the Conference (ſo called) has by its late edict ſeparated us from having any communion with you, yet we doubt not, but many of you can with a loving heart, call us *Brethren*. We often call to mind the many precious times we have had together, before the preſent preachers were taken out to travel;* therefore, we are firmly perſuaded, that it would not be unacceptable to you, to know the particular things which we wiſh to have eſtabliſhed among us, for the future proſperity of Zion, and for the requeſting of *which*, we have been

* Mr. Johnſon tell us in his pamphlet, page 9, "we have not in Ireland three men who have travelled twenty years"—But we can affirm—that there are five or ſix among the thirty-two men who have been excluded, that have been joined to the Methodiſt connexion, from twenty-five to thirty years, and upwards, who have adorned the goſpel of Chriſt. How reaſonable is it then, that thoſe men ſhould be taken from among their brethren, and to be ſet up as an Inquiſition to expel from the connexion thirty-two officers, who gladly ſupported the cauſe of God, before many of them knew any thing of religion?

expelled the Connexion, viz. that the people ſhall have a voice in the formation of their own laws—in the choice of their own miniſters—and in the diſtribution of their own property. Firſt then, we wiſh to have a voice in the formation of the laws by which we are to be governed: the reaſon of our requeſting this is evident to all, who are in any meaſure acquainted with the laws lately made by the Conference.

In their Minutes for 1796, we find the following law, page 28: "That no Local Preacher ſhall be allowed to preach in any other circuit without producing a recommendation from the Superintendant of the circuit where he lives: nor ſuffer any invitation to be admitted as a plea, whether from men in office or not, without the *previous* knowledge and *full* conſent of the Superintendant of the place, where any one may aſk him to preach." What can all this mean? Is not this minute deſigned to bring every Local Preacher into a ſtate of abject ſubmiſſion to Aſſiſtant preachers? Can charity itſelf ſuppoſe that the rule is not made to reſtrain their influence, and to give Aſſiſtant Preachers a greater ſhare of power? Will the Local Preachers tamely ſubmit to this rule, and walk in the way which it points out? Can they in conſcience ſacrifice their liberty, to gratify the views of any that may make laws to bind them, beyond whatever was known in the records of Methodiſm?

In the Minutes for the ſame year, page 29, you find the following law: "That, as the Preachers are eminently *one body*, nothing ſhall be done by any individual, which would be prejudicial to the whole, or to any part thereof; therefore, *no Preacher ſhall publiſh* ANY THING but what is given to the Conference, and printed in our own preſs. The Book Committee to determine what is proper to be printed." The reaſon they aſſign for making this law is, "to prevent improper perſons from publiſhing any thing that might diſturb the peace of the Connexion."

It is neceſſary to obſerve here, that a number of letters and pamphlets have lately been circulated, which pointed out many evils that exiſted in the Connexion, which are calculated to carry conviction to the conſciences of all that read them. The Conference ſeems to be more afraid of the preſs, employed by any member of its own body, than any thing elſe. Travelling Preachers have acceſs within the veil, and ſhould they write what they have *ſeen* and *heard*, this would amazingly affect the whole body of the people. Therefore, *no Preacher ſhall publiſh any thing*, good, bad, or indifferent, "but what is

given to the Conference, the Book Committee to determine what is proper to be printed." Moſt of the preachers belonging to the Book Committee are the very perſons that have the chief management of our affairs in their hands. They wiſh to perſuade the people, that there are no particular grievances in the Connexion. Nothing will be allowed to paſs through their hands, that is calculated to weaken or deſtroy their authority and influence; or any that ſhare with them in the management of our affairs. By this act, paſſed in the year 1796, every preacher is effectually prevented from expoſing any evils to our people, unleſs he ſet aſide this rule, and ſubmit to the conſequences.

Some may be ready to ſay, if they have thus bound themſelves, the hands of local Preachers, Leaders, Stewards, Truſtees, and private Members are at liberty.—Nay verily; for in minutes for the ſame year, page 32—"Let no man, nor number of men, in our Connexion, on any account or occaſion, circulate letters, call meetings, do, or attempt to do any thing *new*, till it has been firſt appointed by the Conference." In this minute we find the preachers aſſuming abſolute dominion over the people, and forbidding what the laws of God and man allow. The ſcriptures and the laws of our country allow members belonging to the Methodiſts Connexion to meet together, without firſt petitioning the Conference for liberty. Can it be ſuppoſed, that 100,000 Methodiſts will ſubmit to it, without heſitation? On the contrary, will it not ſhake the ſlumber from their minds, and lead them to claim their privileges which belong to them as men, and as Chriſtians?

Secondly, with reſpect to the choice of our own Miniſters. This is both reaſonable and ſcriptural—and if we think it juſt to have the choice of ſervants to prepare our food, and phyſicians to attend upon us when ſick—will not the ſame reaſoning hold good, and much more ſo, concerning the choice of thoſe who miniſter to our ſpiritual wants, and counteract the diſeaſes of the human mind? But ſome will be ready to ſay—"This is already granted to the people,"—If ſo, it is of a very late date---We cannot ſay that we know one particular inſtance of it---But we know many to the contrary. Admitting that there be a fixed law, that none ſhall go out to travel without being firſt mentioned and approved of, at a quarterly meeting---Yet while the Conference is compoſed ONLY of preachers, they can make and repeal laws at their pleaſure.

Hence Mr. Benson tells us, (in his Pamphlet published at Leeds, March 22, 1796, and entitled, "The Discipline of the Methodists Defended."—P. 9.) "Now, my Brethren, recollect that the *Leaders*, *Stewards*, and *Trustees*, must always constitute a great majority of such a meeting, and then say, who rule—We or *you?* In *whom* is the greater power vested? And *who* have most reason to complain? I would advise you to be *quiet*, and rest satisfied with the power you have obtained; for if you do not, some of us will move the next Conference for an abrogation of the preceding rule, which many think very partial in your favour, and we have no *doubt* of carrying the MOTION, and then you may help yourselves as you can!!!" This reminds us of Solomon's words. *Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble, is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*—Prov. 18, 19.

Thirdly, a voice in the distribution of our own property.—Here you may be ready to enquire what do you mean by your own property? We have partly anticipated ourselves in our REPLY. We mean the different collections which are made among us for carrying on the work of God—such as the yearly collection, the Kingswood collection, the preachers fund collection, and the profits arising from the sale of books.—Some may be ready to deny that the latter is our own property. We know the Preachers tell us so, when they are selling their books among us. There are very few that has been joined to the Methodist Connexion for any considerable time, but what have heard the Preachers say, (when vending their books), "we do not thus recommend them for our own profit; the profits arising from the sale of all our books is for the good of our Connexion." But ask these Gentlemen for an account of the disbursement of these profits, which is not less than 2000l. per year—and they will tell you, (if you have been a Member of the Connexion for 30 years) that the profits of the books are nothing to you: it is as much our own money, as the profits of any other Bookseller in the kingdom. Thus when they are selling their books, they say, "The profits are your's"—(for every Member is a component part of the Connexion)—but when they have got the money, they say, "it is our property," and no one has a right but ourselves to know what is done with it. If any of us could be present next Conference, when the old formal question will be asked, "Has any of our Rules been overlooked, which it is necessary to revive again"—we would answer, an important one of our Lord's has been *overlooked* by you for these many years; and it is *very necessary* for you to *revive* it: it is con-

tained in St. Matthew v. 37.—" *Let your* YEA *be* YEA, *and your* NAY *be* NAY." The obſervance of this rule would have a tendency to deſtroy all *Duplicity* and *Equivocation*.

And now, Brethren, we have laid before you in theſe three particulars the whole of our requeſts. We ſpeak as unto wiſe men, judge ye what we ſay—we entreat you to weigh theſe things in the balance of the Sanctuary, and you will be conſtrained to acknowledge they are founded on Reaſon and Scripture. Conſcious of this, and ſenſible of the neceſſity of ſpeedily adopting an equitable form of Diſcipline in the Methodiſt Connexion, we publiſhed our ADDRESS. But ſome of the Preachers deſired us to ſtop the circulation of them, ſaying, " it is highly probable the Conference will take theſe things into conſideration." For the ſake of peace we complied, and ſent the following letter to the Conference :—

To the Methodiſt Preachers aſſembled in Conference.

DEAR BRETHREN,

We think it our duty at this particular time to addreſs you, and the more ſo as we are convinced that on your determination, in a great degree, depends the proſperity of that part of Chriſt's Militant Church in this kingdom, unto which you and we do belong. As long as the Sun and Moon ſhall endure we wiſh real Methodiſm to flouriſh and increaſe : until the earth is renewed, and the univerſe filled with the glory of God.

We have to lament, that ſince the death of the venerable Mr. John Weſley, whoſe memory we ſhall ever revere, vital Methodiſm hath been on the decline, and is declining very faſt in this kingdom. We beg leave to mention to you that we think, that in part it is owing to unſcriptural laws having been made in the different Conferences ſince his death. We have not been idle ſpectators of thoſe things which do ſo materially concern us, our children, and all thoſe that wiſh that genuine Methodiſm may proſper. Every ſucceeding month convinces us ſtill more, that ſomething muſt be done to fix the connexion on ſuch a foundation that it may ſtand ſecure, and be the admiration of all the other communities in theſe nations.

It was for this end that we have publiſhed our Addreſs. We have in a ſmall degree circulated ſome of them ; a few of the preachers thought it would be beſt to wait the determination of Conference ; we therefore have acceded to their requeſt, and have not proceeded further. We think that there is not any

complaint contained in our Addreſs that is not well founded, nor any thing contained in the Eight Propoſitions but what is both reaſonable and ſcriptural; and when ſtrictly examined will be found agreeable to the diſcipline and cuſtoms of the antient as well as modern Chriſtian Churches. We believe the leaders in the connexion are as holy, and endowed with as much rational underſtanding as any other religious body (taking number for number) of men in the world.

We think that a few of thoſe delegated from the whole body to Diſtrict Meetings and Conference, to help to make or reviſe any law or laws, would not in the leaſt degree militate againſt the dignity of the preachers. We ſee and feel the neceſſity of it—would to the Lord there was none!

We know the purity of our intentions reſpecting thoſe matters, and we believe it is agreeable to the Lord we ſhould look for that which is our indubitable right. Therefore, in the name of our God and Saviour, we are determined to perſevere in his good cauſe until our grievances are redreſſed.

Liſburn, July, 9th, 1798.

[Here followed the thirty names.]

The following is the anſwer we received:—

SIRS,

Your letter has been read in Conference, and we are deſired to ſend you the following anſwer: The Conference conſider the plan of electing by the votes of the people, and ſending to the Conference and diſtrict meetings, Committees, DELEGATES, is founded on the principles of JACOBINISM; principles, which we abhor. Such principles have an immediate tendency, to bring into the church of God, diſorder and confuſion, ſimilar in its way, to that which the ſame principles have brought into the ſtate. We are certain that our late venerable father in the goſpel, deteſted theſe principles, as much as any man on earth. The economy he eſtabliſhed among the Methodiſts, his writings and public declarations from the pulpit, have borne witneſs of this---We are therefore determined in the moſt reſolved manner, and with the moſt unanimous ſpirit, to reject the plan of delegates, in whatever ſhape or manner it may be propoſed. We are ready to receive any complaints from our people, to conſider them duly

and to redreſs them as far as they appear to us to be real grievances. YEA, to make every ſacrifice, which we believe conſiſtent, with the proſperity of the work of God, to the ſatisfaction of their minds.

As to you gentlemen, we conſider your late conduct ſo perfectly oppoſite to what we believe to be the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, that we can, on no account, have any further connexion with you, till God through his grace has given you repentance.

Signed in behalf,
And by order of the Conference,
T. COKE, Preſident.
A. HAMILTON, jun. Secretary.

Dublin, July 19th, 1798.

And now, Brethren, we have laid before you the whole of our requeſts—the Letter we ſent to Conference—and the Anſwer we received. Perhaps by this time you are led to enquire, "What can be the reaſon, that the Preachers are ſo much againſt Delegates ſitting in Conference with them?" This is a query which we cannot anſwer. Some *reaſons* ſuggeſt themſelves to our minds, but leſt you ſhould think us wanting in Charity, we will forbear to aſſign them, and refer you to the Preachers themſelves for a ſolution to your query.

If the Apoſtles were to ariſe from the Dead, they would be aſhamed to own the preſent Methodiſt Preachers as their *followers*. When the Grecians murmured about the neglect of their widows in the daily miniſtration—(Acts 6. 1—7.) What was the conduct and language of the Apoſtles? "*Then the twelve called the multitude of the* DISCIPLES *unto them, and ſaid, it is not reaſon that we ſhould leave the word of God and ſerve tables. Wherefore Brethren, look* YE *out among you ſeven men of honeſt report, full of the* HOLY GHOST, *and wiſdom, whom we may appoint over this buſineſs. But* WE *will give ourſelves continually to prayer; and to the Miniſtry of the word.—And the ſaying* PLEASED *the whole multitude.*" When ſome of the Methodiſt Preachers read this paſſage, they will be ready to ſay, "this is a hard ſaying, who can bear it." If the people *murmer* in our day—are they ready to ſay, "*look ye out from among yourſelves men of honeſt report*, who ſhall carry *all* your collections to the Conference, and aſſiſt in diſburſing them *impartially*." No: the very contrary is their language. Mr. Mather could ſay, "we will ſacrifice one half of the

Chapels in the kingdom, before your Delegates shall sit in Conference."

If they have not got as much self-confidence about them as Bishop Mather, they will say in the mild language of Mr. Johnson, "if you do not approve of our proceedings, you have an easy redress, you can leave us!"

But observe the language of the men who labour among us---Mr. Gustavus Armstrong and others say, "Before we will agree to the plan of delegates, we will entirely quit travelling and go home to our business" Brethren, whenever you hear those lordly gentlemen making use of the above language, say unto them, "in the name of God, go home to your business---and remain there, "till God through his grace has given you repentance."

There is another passage of scripture which we wish to recommend to your consideration. It is contained in 1 Cor. 16, 1---4. *Now concerning the* COLLECTION *for the Saints, as I have given order to the* CHURCHES *of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I am come, whomsoever* YE *shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto* JERUSALEM. *And if it be meet that I* GO *also, they shall* GO *with me.* We are led to conclude, that the reading of this passage, (without any commenting upon it) will carry conviction to every christian, that the things which we request, are not only reasonable, but agreeable to, and founded upon Scripture and the practice of the church in the first ages of Christianity. We cannot help admiring the *words* and *spirit* of the apostle PAUL. He did not say as Mr. Wood did in the Lisburn district meeting---"MR. PRESIDENT, I insist upon it, that you support the DIGNITY of this meeting."---No: the apostle had no objection to the man who would be appointed by the people, going up to Jerusalem, and sitting, and consulting with them in their Conference. But when the Methodist preachers in this kingdom leave their circuits and ride up to Dublin, they think that none but the *Great High Priests*, should attempt to enter into the HOLY OF HOLIES.

There is another observation we might make upon the Apostle's words; he did not say, "If it be meet that I go," you need not send any *delegate*, for I can take the *collection* with me. If I must "needs go," and you send another man with the *collection*, it supposes that you suspect my honesty. This is not the language of holy Paul. Hear his own words—*And if*

it be meet that I go, they SHALL *go with me.* For why? Mr. Wesley tells us in his comment on this place, v. 4. *They shall go with me,* to remove all *possible* suspicion."

O that our preachers were but possessed of Paul's noble and generous spirit! But alas! we must adopt the language of Mr. Charles Wesley, when speaking of the primitive fathers:

"Where shall we wander now to find,
The successors they left behind?
The faithful, whom we seek in vain,
Are minish'd from the sons of men."

Dear Brethren, as we have given you the letter we received from Conference, bear with us while we make a few remarks upon it. When we first read the letter we could not help admiring the officiousness of the Doctor. We were led to think that in the whole of his conduct he has an eye to our Lord's charge to his disciples, *He that would be the greatest among you, let him become the servant of all.* For though Mr. Hamilton, jun. was Secretary to the Conference, yet the Doctor, to shew his disapprobation to our requests, would write the letter of our expulsion with his own hand. Now of all persons in the Conference, Dr. Coke ought to have been the last in opposing the people's *just* and *lawful* claims; and if you ask the reason why, we answer, because of his former declarations, both public and private. They say, "The Conference consider the plan of electing by the votes of the people, and sending to the Conference and district committees, delegates, is grounded on the principles of *Jacobinism*, principles which we abhor." How Doctor Coke could have the audacity, after what he has *said* and *done*, to throw out such an insinuation as this, we shall leave to his own mind to reconcile. To mention the things which this *great* man has uttered in private companies, would have no credit with many; but all who are in any measure acquainted with the Doctor's present declarations, and the sentiments contained in the Address which he sent to George Washington, on peace being restored to America, will easy perceive the consistency of your *worthy* President.* You farther ob-

* Seven years elapsed from the death of Mr. Wesley to the time of the Doctor's being made President of the English Conference. Why they should then elect a person, so *hasty*, *shallow* and *changeable*, we cannot divine, unless they did it, in the first place, to prevent

ſerve, " We are certain our late venerable Father in the Goſpel deteſted theſe principles as much as any man on earth."--- To this we might anſwer, in the words of your *able advocate*, Mr. Johnſon ; " Here you miſtake as reading without book." Mr. Weſley was never againſt the people having a voice in the management of their *own affairs*. He was ſo far from this, that he gave it as his opinion that this would be the caſe after his death. In the Large Minutes, page 52, Mr. Weſley ſays, " Several gentlemen are offended at my having ſo much power, and demand a free Conference ; that is, a meeting of all the Preachers, wherein all things ſhall be determined by the moſt votes. I anſwer—It is poſſible after my death ſomething of this kind may take place ; but not while I live. To *me* the preachers have engaged themſelves to ſubmit, to ' ſerve me as ſons in the Goſpel.' But they are not thus engaged to any man, or number of men, beſides. To *me* the people in general will ſubmit ; but they will not yet ſubmit to any other." Thus you ſee from this paſſage, that Mr. Weſley (under God) looked upon the Preachers as his ſervants. We aſk, in the name of common ſenſe, whoſe ſervants are they now ? Surely they will not anſwer as a body of Preachers, " We are the ſervants of one another." If they be the true meſſengers of Jeſus Chriſt, they will ſay with his faithful ſervants of old— " *We preach not ourſelves, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and* OURSELVES YOUR SERVANTS, *for Chriſt's ſake.*" Survey the ſubject, then, in this point of view, and is it not aſtoniſhing, (*Oh! tell it not in* GATH) that a body of men, moſt of them taken from the loweſt occupations in life, ſupported and nouriſhed by their brethren, ſhould ſet themſelves up as an inquiſition, and without the leaſt ſhadow of a trial expel from their Connexion thirty-two men in office, ſaying, " As to you, gentlemen, we can on no account have any further connexion with you, till God, through his grace, has given you repentance." We call upon you, our brethren, throughout this

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the Doctor from putting into execution the reſolution he had formed in his mind, viz. that he would entirely quit England and go and ſettle in America ; or, ſecondly, they might do it by way of recompence for the great ſervices rendered the connexion by his *able* vindication of the Deity of Jeſus Chriſt ; a Sermon which he has not preached leſs than 200 or 300 times. Though we cannot ſay that we have not been edified in hearing it ſo repeatedly, yet, when returning home, we were conſtrained to ſay, *alas! Maſter, for it was borrowed.*

kingdom, to consider whereunto such proceedings as these tend ;* and for God's sake, for your own, and your brethren's sake, enter your protest against them. Consult your reason and the word of God, and they will inform you what your privileges are, as a member of the Church of Christ. Then lay them before those ministers whom you highly esteem for their works sake ; and say, " These are our *rights* and *privileges*, and as we believe you to be men called of God to preach his Gospel, we will gladly receive you to minister unto us in the *word* and *doctrine* ; and as you minister unto us in *spiritual*, you shall freely partake with us in our *temporal things*." If they refuse to comply with this reasonable and scriptural proposal, then tell them, " You are at liberty to withdraw ;" and, in future, we will receive those men whom God in the order of his providence is raising up, and who have left the " serving of tables" to others, and constantly attend to their own sphere of action.

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* A very great and learned man makes an observation on the conduct of the Methodist Preachers, which, we think, will cast some light on this subject—" For my own part (says he) I have no doubt but the leading men among the Methodists were influenced originally by none but the best of motives—a general concern for the souls of men. Nothing else, I think, can account for their conduct, as they were then circumstanced ; but finding themselves, by degrees, at the head of a large body of people, and in possession of considerable power and influence, they must not have been MEN if they had not felt the love of power gratified in such a situation ; and they must have been MORE THAN MEN if their subsequent conduct had not been more or less *influenced* by it." What their conduct was influenced by this last Conference, when they expelled from the connexion 32 men in office, without *the least shadow of a trial*, we will leave to the candid of all sects and persuasions to judge. Perhaps there is not any body of religious men upon the face of the earth that have taken greater strides towards the establishing of Popery again, than the body of Methodist Preachers have done since the death of Mr. Wesley.—*Passive obedience* and *non-resistance* is now become the order of the day. It is expulsion for any member to talk about what is called the *old* and *new* plan.—[See Arm. Maga. for Sept. 1795].

Mr. John Pawson seemed conscious of the truth of these remarks, when he cryed out in this forcible language—

" Remember, O ye Methodists ! that the reign of Popery is past and gone ; let it never be restored among you under any *shape* or *name*. In the name of him who bought you with his blood, maintain the rights and liberties of your own consciences !"—[See his Pamphlet, page 23, printed at Liverpool, 1795.]

Perhaps, brethren, you may find ſome reluctance to this neceſſary duty. That love which puts the beſt conſtruction upon every action, may ſuggeſt many objections. You may be ready to ſay, " Why, I believe, there are many good men among them, and their cauſe has ſo flouriſhed that their converts are become *many* and *great*." If this be any argument in favour of them, it is ſurely a great argument in favour of Popery. We read of many great and good men among the Romans. This we acknowledge by publiſhing their works among us—namely, Thomas á Kempis—Chriſtian Pattern—The Life of Monſ. De Renty, &c.—And as to their number being great, they are but an handful when compared with thoſe who once acknowledged the ſupremacy of the Pope.

But a greater objection than thoſe ariſes in your minds, viz:—That this mode of diſcipline is " grounded on the principles of Jacobiniſm"—Ah! Brethren, be cautious how you receive this inſinuation—and remember it has always been the lot of thoſe who have oppoſed the Prieſthood, to have all manner of evil ſpoken againſt them. *But bleſſed are they who are perſecuted for* RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE." They, in order to throw duſt in your eyes, join RELIGION with POLITICS—and to intimidate you, make uſe of the obnoxious word *Jacobiniſm*. We hope dear Brethren, that you will not be enſnared with the ſound of words; but calmly contraſt the conduct of the excluded men, with the epithets given them by the Conference. We chearfully pay our taxes—In all our ſupplications at the throne of Grace, both public and private, we pray for the KING, and for all that are in *authority*—And reaſon and ſcripture conſtrain us to acknowledge,—that power and authority are neceſſary to the well-being of any State. But ſtill, this does not deſtroy the force of our Lords words. *Though the Princes of the Gentiles, exerciſe dominion over them, and they who are great exerciſe authority upon them*, IT SHALL NOT BE SO AMONG YOU.

And now, Brethren, a few words more, and we ſhall conclude. We think, that if the whole body of Methodiſts in this kingdom, would come forward with a *manly*, *Chriſtian* fortitude, and claim their juſt RIGHTS and PRIVILEGES as members of Chriſt's Church, it might ſave the whole Connexion from ruin.

In the year 1795, we find that the Methodiſt Preachers in England, were engaged with each other in a paper war. One ſide was a Mather, Thompſon, Benſon, and Rodda: on the other, a Moore, Coke, Pawſon, Bradburn, and Murlin. The

Societies were troubled every month in the year with printed circular letters, and pamphlets; containing answers and confutations of their antagonists. We have now one of these printed letters before us; it is dated Bristol, November, 1794, and signed, Joseph Benson, Richard Rodda, Thomas Vasey. In one single note they point out eleven falsehoods contained in Mr. Bradburn's printed letter. The people plainly saw that these men were contending for that *power* and *authority* which did not belong to them; and therefore when they came forward to claim their rights, and thereby put a stop to these contending parties;---'tis strange to tell---that these men, though so opposite and embittered against each other before, combined, divided the power, agreed to reign jointly, and to oppose the people having any voice in the management of their own affairs.

In this contest, Dr. Coke could say, "hitherto we have been, since the death of Mr. Wesley, the most perfect aristocracy existing perhaps upon earth. The people have NO power: we THE WHOLE, in the fullest sense which can be CONCEIVED. If there be any change in favour of religious liberty, the people certainly should have some power." (Letter from Dr. Coke to A. K. dated Ireland, April 29, 1795.) Hear the language of this *consistant man*, in the letter of our expulsion:

"We are therefore *determined* in the most *resolved manner*, and with the most *unanimous spirit*, to reject the plan of delegates in whatever *shape* or *manner* it may be proposed."

Various reasons suggest themselves to our minds for this great alteration in the Doctor's sentiments; but we shall forbear to enlarge at present. When our weather-cocks veer about, they inform us which way the wind blows. A retrospective view of the Doctor's conduct for this four or five years past, brings to our minds a saying of one of the ancients; "I would rather be the *first* in a VILLAGE, than the *second* in ROME."

The subject of this address, being so interesting, not only to us, but to all those who wish *genuine* Methodism to prosper, has led us to say more than we first intended. The Preachers tell you that we are determined upon a division; now to assure you of the contrary, we here declare publicly, that whenever the three particulars, in the beginning of this address, are acceded to, we are willing any day to be united with our Brethren of the old Connexion. But we are sorry to say, that while the Conference is composed only of Preachers, they will observe *rules* and *laws* no farther than will serve their own interest.

In the minutes of Conference for 1794, page 33, it is enacted, "that no Truſtee, (however accuſed or defective in conforming to the eſtabliſhed rules of Society) ſhall be removed from the Society, unleſs his crime or breach of the rules of the Society be proved in the *preſence* of the Truſtees and Leaders." Now, in direct violation of this *law*, they have excluded this laſt Conference, nine Truſtees in the Liſburn circuit; without bringing them before *any* meeting, either of LEADERS or TRUSTEES!

From a conſideration of theſe things, we are firmly perſuaded that every impartial perſon is ready to ſay, "that the things you contend for are abſolutely neceſſary for the future proſperity of Methodiſm." Brethren we muſt conclude, and perhaps we cannot do it better than in the words of one of our *old friends*, Mr. Samuel Tucker, which are now before us in his own hand-writing, and which we inſerted in our former addreſs.---"Should your opinion meet *ours* upon the ſubject, we truſt we ſhall have your *hearty* ſupport in bringing about *ſo deſirable an object*, and introducing *this* or ſome ſimilar plan, (viz. the eight propoſitions added at the end of our former addreſs) into *general* and *univerſal* practice in the Methodiſt Societies; as we are fully convinced, *nothing ſhort of ſuch a plan can have the deſired effect*."

Signed in behalf of the New Connexion,

WILLIAM BROWN,
JOHN M'CLURE,
DUNCAN LIVINGSTON,
HU. MURRAY,
WM. JOHNSTON,
} The Committee.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

, Any respectable Characters in the Methodist Connexion, who wish to have any more information upon the different subjects mentioned in the REPLY and ADDRESS, attention will be given to all Letters (Post-paid) directed to any of the Committee, to be left at William Johnston's, Manchester Cotton-Yarn Ware-House, Lisburn. Likewise any Society, Travelling or Local Preacher, who wish to join the Body of Methodists belonging to the New Itinerancy, may apply as above.